

# PARVENUS' PROGRESS--AN ALLEGORY

## THE MILL OF TOIL



"I will help you," said the Alluring Effulgence, whose name was Social Ambition. "You have money and your wife has nerve. Leave Obscurityville and the Mill of Toil and I will guide you to Social Heights. Success dwells there."

### THE SINS OF THE FATHER By Gertrude Major

"I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Me."—Ex. 5:20.

"Therefore, cease from all your light speeches; from all your laughter; from all your lustful desires; from all your pride and light-mindedness; from all your wicked doings."—Sec. 28, verse 121, Doctrine and Covenants.

"But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth."—Sec. 33, verse 40, Doctrine and Covenants.

"Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants and said unto them, 'Why? what is the cause of this great evil?'—Sec. 121, verse 52, Doctrine and Covenants.

Dearly beloved, we are together to talk of a grave subject; we are going to talk about the coming generation of citizens in the State of Utah. We are going to consider the children who go to our schools, who are on our streets, the children whom we see in our public parks, the children whom we hear in our juvenile courts; and we are going to ask what are the conditions of these children's lives, where they were born,

and in what environment have they lived that they should bring the red blush of shame to our faces. What of these children?

A zealous, long-whiskered elder called at our house one day with a book called "The Defense of the Faith." We asked him why the faith needed defending and he answered, "Because of the prevailing prejudice against polygamy."

"Does that need defending?" we asked. He considered, and aimed, with the accuracy of long practice, at the cuspidor before he replied, "Well—er—the fundamental argument in favor of polygamy is that it brings purer children into the world."

"And are the children of these plural wives more pure?" we asked in a tell-me-more-about-God-Uncle-Tom voice.

To the credit of humanity and the book agent the elder shifted his ground and instead of replying brought forth another argument. "Well, you see," he began "in the early days when we were led by the Spirit across the desert, and after many hardships and dangers reached the garden, we were threatened with massacre by the Indians."

our tone and continued: "As I was saying, there were so many Indians and so few saints that it was so—er—difficult to induce immigrants to come here."

"Was that—er—experience at Mountain Meadows calculated to induce them to undertake the perils of the trip for a like reception?" we asked as one seeking light.

"It was so hard to get people enough together for self-defense," the elder went on, and we discovered that he was quite deaf in his Mountain Meadows ear. "It was necessary for us to propagate ourselves for our own protection against the Indians."

"You mean," we asked, "that you brought the children into the world to protect you from the Indians?"

"That was one reason," he answered. "We figured mentally. It takes three-fourths of a year before a child is ready to claim its soul. We usually allow it a year in which to cut its front teeth and take its first wobbly little steps; sometimes we have to allow it even a month or two more to do this. Then it takes a little more time for it to clothe its thoughts with speech, and even after we substitute a string of spoons for the rattle-box it takes some time for the muscles to harden sufficiently for a real effective use of the hatchet. It even takes some muscles to cock a gun. So figure as we would we could see that even with the most forward it would not be possible for the children to protect their parents under several years. Then suppose they should all have the measles at once! It certainly looked bad for the saints."

"But," we voiced our deductions, "weren't you afraid that the Indians would get tired resting on their tomahawks and come in and what them on some of the elders before the children would be old enough to defend them?"

But even here the elder did not quite clear up the cloud of our ignorance by the sun of his wisdom. He only said that we could only trust in God and intimated that there was still a warmer place than Utah for those who flouted at religion. We felt bad because we had not flouted; we had only inquired. Maybe it is logical to propagate for your own protection, but what of the children?

We are going to tell you a little story. Perhaps we didn't "make it up"; we don't believe it is original; we think it was told us long, long ago; it may be you have heard it or dreamed it some day when you have perchance been alone in the foothills or by the river or in the forest where you have heard the song of some golden-throated bird singing to his mate. Maybe you remembered it some morning when you lifted up your eyes to the hills or above them to where the heavens declare the glory of God. Maybe it came to you in a strain of music, but we believe that you have

heard it or dreamed it, the story of a man and a woman; the story of the foundation of a home; the story of little children being born with a heritage of honor, being taught the principle of right living, the sacredness of truth and the sanctity of moral law. In that story we have heard or dreamed of mutual honor and respect. We know of a book that teaches children to honor their father and mother; we know of a book that tells parents to provoke not their children to wrath. And we are going to inquire how we can follow these two teachings either if we are polygamous parents or children, or if we can follow them and believe in that little story.

Suppose your father was the father of the children of five other wives, would you honor him? Suppose your mother was the mistress of five other men, would you honor her? Suppose your father had, say, twenty or thirty or forty other children to claim the protection of his parenthood, wouldn't he provoke you to wrath? What of these children? Do you think it makes purer children to defy the very first principles of right living? Does it make a child purer to send him out on the streets to sell papers as soon as he

can fairly walk, because his father has so many wives and the wives have so many children that there is not bread for him to eat unless he helps earn it? Does it make him purer to be taught that he must not tell the truth about some things, and in case he is asked, he must lie about his parents? Does that make him purer? Does it make him purer to go to meeting and hear one thing taught and go home and see another thing practiced? Does it make him purer to bear the jealousies, the back-bitings and the rivalries between his mother and the other wives of his father; between his mother's children and theirs? You ask me if there are these jealousies, and I ask you if these wives are not women. You ask me if there is this deceit, and I ask you what the president of the church told the government and what he told his own people when he returned home. You ask me if they teach one thing and practice another, and I ask you to hear their sermons and investigate their lives. What of these children?

Do you know that in Salt Lake City there are houses with secret rooms, with sealed doors in the walls, with trap doors in the floors, which, when you open them, reveal a flight of steps which descend to an underground apartment? I can give you the street and number of such houses. Why were they built and what of the children that are born in such houses? Do you know what language some of these children use on the public school grounds? Have you ever thought of the future of the boys and girls who at 12 and 11, even at 7 and 6, have a repertoire of foul language, of obscene, perverted knowledge, who lie as the sparks fly upward? What of these children and in their State and their country? Whose fault is it and for whose sins are they suffering?

We asked one sad-eyed, stoop-shouldered old Mormon woman, who, after having borne a dozen children, was earning her bread by washing, what she thought of polygamy. She wiped the suds off her hands and the sweat out of her eyes before she replied, slowly, as though weighing every word: "Well, I suppose it has to be. You see there are seven women in the world to where there is one man, and you see, heaven ain't open to a woman if she is barren, so, of course, God meant every woman to have children, because so many women would be lost if the men didn't live with more than one."

"Do you think that is true?" we asked. "Why, ain't it?" she asked, as astonished as though we had told her the stars had fallen. "It's a lie." "But," she plighted her anron and knitted her brow in bewilderment—"it must be true because science says so, and—and God said so, too." "Who told you so?" we demanded. "Bishop," she replied. And so long as bishop can make them believe his interpretation of science and of God so long will he have a hand around the necks of the women of his ward, for the man—the bishop's teaching

takes away the curb of decency and makes a virtue of licentiousness.

A woman in our ward fell ill last winter and it came to the ears of her neighbors that she and her children were without food or fuel. We took some of our Saturday baking and went over to see her. She was in bed in a room destitute of comfort or order. Four little children, the eldest a boy of 8 and the youngest a baby of 2 years of age, were huddled around a rusted stove in which smoked and smoldered a mender fire of damp sticks, which was the only antidote to the chill of the desolate adobe shack. The children were ragged and dirty past belief, and judging from the avidity with which they devoured the food we set on the table, were half starved. There was an older girl, a hollow-eyed, tubercular child of 11, who was out working for a living until she had fallen ill several weeks before. We asked her where the children's father was, and she told us that he had gone on a mission. She went on to say that she and her brother were to send him \$5 a month. The brother had been out of work all winter, and, what with the tithing and sending the money to her husband, and the slow pay and small washings of some of her customers, she had not been able to save any money. Some women are so shockingly extravagant!

She made a pretense of religious fervor and said, with a sanctimonious whine, that Christ was sufficient for her. We looked at the children, all of whom, including the baby, were "paw-

ing" into the lemon pie which one of the neighbors had contributed. We took note of their hungry, chafy faces, their crafty, shifting eyes, and cried out in the bitterness of our hearts: "He is not sufficient to feed and clothe your children." "Oh, well," she said easily, "they'll soon be out from under foot." What of them then?

Is there anywhere under the vault of heaven more need of missionaries than in the State of Utah? Are there any vines in the vineyard of the Lord more filled with poisoned branches than are on this prolific tree of Mormonism? Who needs the teaching of Christ more than the children of this alleged religion? Who needs saving if not the children whose pre-natal influence was of oppression, licentiousness and perverted law? The black sins of the fathers of polygamy are being visited upon the children, upon the State, and upon the country, verily unto the third and fourth generation. Confronted with this problem we can only bow our heads and say humbly, "Lead kindly light" away from the "cause of this great evil." Let us pray for the children of Utah.

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